Consumption of Cereals

1543. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that per capita consumption of cereals both in urban and rural areas has been declining day by day and between 1972-73 and 2004-05, the share of cereals in total consumer expenditure fell from 41 per cent to 18 per cent in rural areas and 23 per cent to 10 per cent in urban areas;

(b) if so, whether it is due to neglect of marginal, small farmers and less allocation for them;

(c) whether this also attributes to surplus food stock in Government granaries and Aam Aadami having empty kitchen; and

(d) if so, the details and action Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) As per the National Sample Survey (NSS) 61st Round Report No. 508 (July, 2004 - June, 2005), it is observed that per capita consumption of cereals both in rural and urban areas has declined between 1972-73 and 2004-05, as given below:

% share of major food groups in total expenditure

Sector	Year	All food	Cereals
Rural	1972-73	72.9	40.6
	1987-88	64.0	26.3
	1993-94	63.2	24.2
	1999-00	59.4	22.2
	2004-05	55.0	18.0
Urban	1972-73	64.5	23.3
	1987-88	56.4	15.0
	1993-94	54.7	14.0
	1999-00	48.1	12.4
	2004-05	42.5	10.1

NOTE: Share for 1999-2000 are only approximately comparable to other quinquennial rounds due to difference in recall period for I-type categories of consumption items.

The reasons for change in the pattern of cereals can be attributed to a number of factors such as changes in income, tastes and preferences, including that for processed food products, relative prices of food items, etc.

In order to make foodgrains available for consumption to the targeted poor population of the country, Government allocates foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) for 6.52 crore Below Poverty Line (BPL) families including Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families @ 35 kg. per family per month. Allocation of foodgrains for Above Poverty Line (APL) families is also made depending upon availability of foodgrains in the Central Pool. Under TPDS these foodgrains are supplied at Central Issue Prices, which are highly subsidized and lower than the open market prices.

The PDS (Control) Order, 2001 mandates States and UT Governments to ensure proper distribution of allocated foodgrains to the beneficiaries.

Besides the above, Government allocates foodgrains under different Welfare Schemes, which include Annapurna Yojana, Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM), Wheat Based Nutrition Programme (WBNP), Nutritional Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG), and Village Grain Bank (VGB) scheme. These schemes are intended to make available foodgrains to the targeted population to enable them to increase their consumption levels.

Global food crisis

1544. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether agriculture emergency kind of situation is emerging in the world and particularly South Asia is going to face food crisis;

(b) if so, what Government has done in this regard;

(c) whether proper distribution of food in crisis ridden areas is still a problem and lots of rice and other cereals are being smuggled to other countries;

(d) if so, how Government proposes to improve the situation; and

(e) whether Government is going to give due priorities to distribution of food in proposed Food Security Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Various reports from FAO describe the agricultural situation in the world and also Asia as steady in the current year. The supply is foreseen to be sufficient to meet the expected demand. However, given the close linkages between cereal markets and other agricultural commodities as well as energy markets extra caution is needed in interpreting the current supply and demand forecast and price developments during the new season. The reports also caution that due to high poverty and increasing food prices, the number of undernourished people in the world as well as in South Asia might increase.

(b) The government has taken several initiatives to ensure that food production not only keeps pace with increasing demand but there is surplus to meet unforeseen situation. These initiatives